

ON
D
Brown
ce of
Robert
chart.
Farrar
Assistant
king,
D. H.
other
risto-
D.
or in
Lip-
Peter
Hu-
tion.
vili-
ague
of
iller.
Emil
cher.
A
.75.
By
lacy
Co-
keth
rry.
per.
inn.
R.
Rex
ank
rea-
ited
op.
By
Al-
an-
G.
ali-
\$3.

THE *Nation*

PERIODICAL ROOM
GENERAL LIBRARY
UNIV. OF MICH.



MARTIN DIES

*and His Committee
on "un-Americanism"*

A Special Supplement

The complete story of a Congressional investigation which began as a political circus but swiftly developed into a menace to democratic processes. A report on committee policy and personnel

•

"The doubts and anger which . . . statements of Mr. Dies tend to arouse in the public mind might as well come from Goebbels himself so far as their practical effect is concerned. As a matter of fact, the effect on our morale would be less damaging if Mr. Dies were on the Hitler pay roll."

VICE-PRESIDENT HENRY A. WALLACE

•

"He followed the doctrine which the Klan has been laying down for the past twenty years. One needs but to look back through the files of the Klan's publications to find repeated ten thousand times the same warning which Mr. Dies sounded. His program . . . so closely parallels the program of the Klan that there is no distinguishable difference between them."

IMPERIAL WIZARD JAMES A. COLESCOTT

•

THE
at
dal

It will, American theory, h don't ad think me chance to respected sworn to obvious v methods legality a

But th emphasis tends to c such beh and the p terial gat reactionar normal C handed r in action.

The D It is not cause inq a People judicial f not to di viduals. I discredit progressiv including And that pression tion of whole.

That is

THE *Nation*

AMERICA'S LEADING LIBERAL WEEKLY SINCE 1865

VOLUME 155

NEW YORK · SATURDAY · OCTOBER 3, 1942

NUMBER 14, PART 2

What Dies Is Up to

BY FRED A. KIRCHWEY

THE story of Martin Dies and his committee is told at length in this issue. It is a sensational and scandalous story. In some of its details it is amusing. It will, I suspect, make many people mad. For most Americans, however little they may worry about political theory, have a strong distaste for unfair behavior. They don't admire blows landed below the belt; they don't think men and women should be attacked and given no chance to defend themselves; they don't like to see old, respected democratic procedures made a joke of by men sworn to defend them. And so the easiest and most obvious way to attack Dies is to expose his unscrupulous methods and trust the natural instinct of the public for legality and fair play to bring about a change.

But this method of attack has its dangers. Too much emphasis on the bad behavior of Dies and his committee tends to distract attention from the purposes that dictate such behavior. It is what Dies is up to that counts—Dies and the group that backs him. For that reason the material gathered in this issue is not merely the story of a reactionary politician who happens to be conducting a normal Congressional investigation in a rather high-handed manner. It is the record of American fascism in action.

The Dies committee is an agency of political civil war. It is not going to use legitimate methods of inquiry because inquiry is not its purpose. (One might as well ask a People's Court in Germany to observe democratic judicial forms.) The purpose of the Dies committee is not to discover and expose subversive groups and individuals. Its purpose—its specific political purpose—is to discredit and if possible destroy the New Deal and the progressive elements in the national Administration, including especially the President of the United States. And that, in turn, is only the immediate practical expression of a much larger purpose, which is the destruction of progressive tendencies in American life as a whole.

That is why the committee has gone out of its way to

attack on the flimsiest grounds the new administrative agencies that are chiefly responsible for the conduct of the war. Congress is as it is—at least until after the coming elections. While the departments vary, their personnel remains relatively constant, though the progressive spirit has permeated the best of them. But the agencies—especially the war agencies—have in many cases attracted men of energy and a liberal point of view. They are the seed-bearers of the democratic future, if there is to be one. It is no accident that Dies, or his Man Friday, Matthews, should have selected the Board of Economic Warfare for perhaps his most unscrupulous attacks. Headed by one of the true democrats of our time, Vice-President Wallace, directed by a dynamic progressive, Milo Perkins, this board has powers which may help to shape the economy of the peace as well as of the war. When Dies tried to discredit this board by mistakenly attributing Communist-front connections to one of its ex-banker members and by shamelessly digging up a harmless book on nudism to ruin the reputation of another of its staff, he was acting on a sound fascist instinct.

That one of his shots miscarried isn't very important. What is important is the fact that his unscrupulous smearing has succeeded in terrorizing practically every agency in the government. A man or woman who was ever on one of the letterheads from which Dies lifts the names of his victims or who is listed in the famous network of the lately exposed Mrs. Elizabeth Dilling is by that token considered ineligible for most appointments. It takes a stout-hearted, tough-hided administrator to pick his staff without regard to their standing in the Social Register of Martin Dies.

Some of the results of the Dies terror have crept into the newspapers. The resignation of Maurice Parmelee from the Board of Economic Warfare and of Malcolm Cowley from the Office of Facts and Figures were among the published triumphs of Dies over decency. But few people know of the hundreds of able men and women

whose names have been proposed for jobs and then dropped, or have not even been proposed, because the shadow of the Dies inquisition lies across the administrator's desk in every agency.

Matters should improve now that the Department of Justice has exposed the hollowness of the charges leveled by the committee against government employees. But will they? Agencies want to dodge trouble and get ahead with their work, and only the other day an official in one of them who called me to inquire about an applicant for a job told me they couldn't be bothered with him if he had had any connection with organizations on the Dies black list.

Whether all its members know it or not, the Dies committee is as authentic and ugly a manifestation of American fascism as Huey Long, or Gerald Winrod, whose appearance before the committee was mysteriously canceled at the last minute, or Father Coughlin, whom Dies never could be induced to investigate at all.

Don't remind me that he poked into the affairs of the Bund or questioned one or two native fascists. Of course he did—just enough of them to hold his franchise. After all, fascism is not yet triumphant in America; even a Dies has to go through the motions of pretending to be a democrat. Dies could afford to investigate a Fritz Kuhn or a Deatherage. Or rather, he couldn't afford not to. His bias is patent to you and me; though apparently it is not patent to the average Congressman. But even a less-than-average Congressman might knit his brow if he noticed that, in a time when the United States was becoming embroiled in a life-and-death struggle with international fascism, the one Congressional committee purporting to inquire into "subversive activities" left fascists and Nazis alone and devoted itself strictly to the job of smearing New Dealers and branding as Communists any progressive who ever signed a statement attacking William Randolph Hearst or gave \$5 to Loyalist Spain.

Dies investigated—if so honorable a word can continue to be used for the sloppy, gossip-column technique of his committee—the irreducible minimum of his fellow-fascists. But the people he set out to save his country from were the liberals, the progressives, the pro-labor, pro-New Deal democrats. He called them Communists, and he got his appropriations from Congress and nice approving-with-qualifications editorials in the press, and he persuaded an astonishingly wide public—just as Hitler did before him—that he was saving it from the ravages of revolution. He not only succeeded in doing this; he succeeded in making people afraid of him. He created the remarkable myth, and sold it to his fellow-Congressmen, that to oppose Dies was to support Stalin. And many a legislator who privately attacked Dies, or at least deplored his "methods," lost his nerve when the moment came to vote no.

But this happened in Germany, too, while Hitler was

on the road to power. Remember? The great press, even the liberal press, feared to attack the rising Hitler openly, though his plug-uglies were beating up honest people in the streets and his anti-Semitism was a stink in the nostrils of the world. The decent German papers deplored this and that—his "methods," his attacks on Jews; they may even have questioned the accuracy of his assertion that Germany was about to be captured by communism. But they let the central menace grow. And so Germany was captured by Hitlerism instead. And Hitler's gentle opponents—the deplorers, the questioners, the civil libertarians—were either taken over or chucked into concentration camps, where their passion for tolerance wouldn't interfere with the rising New Order.

Don't mistake me. Dies is no Hitler. He is an ambitious, reactionary Southern politician. He has not even much of a following in his own state or he would have come in better than fourth in a four-man race for the Senate. Dies is not important as a man or a politician. He is important as a symbol of forces that have been mobilized to defeat our hope of a democratic America, a victorious war, and a people's peace. Dies speaks for a reaction that is today engaged in civil war. And he speaks effectively. We must not fool ourselves with talk about methods and rights and proper Congressional procedures. Dies is not performing a democratic function badly; he is performing an anti-democratic maneuver well. His every move is an act of war. His committee is a camouflaged pillbox in the fascist fight for control of our democracy. It needs to be stormed and overthrown—not reformed.

Forum for Fascists

"I submit that the Dies committee, on the face of the record, has shown itself not to be entitled to continuation. I submit that the committee has demonstrated itself to be the foe of groups the government is trying to unite in the war effort . . . the creator of internal confusion, hubbub, and disunity; the implacable antagonist of the New Deal; the avoider of fair judicial and committee procedure; the exemplar of marked solicitude in its treatment of American fascists; the grantor of the committee forum as a platform from which Jew-baiters, crackpots, and totalitarians identified with fascist organizations spouted their nauseating nostrums. These and many other attributes, omissions, and commissions of the committee make it in my judgment deserving of a quiet and not too well-heralded funeral."—Representative John Coffee, Washington.

BY T
of
bur
seemed c
bor, Mar
Dies, I
for the c
machine
Southern
publicans
nell Tho
Garner—
and Byro
loud spe
Rules Co
give mo
Martin
To repea
the Nort
long as v
minded
wage di
breeds m
convinced
for every
or jockey
there ha
factories
You
big busi
knows v
Tom's C
corpora
erner g
Texa
the Sou
influen
ion of
pumpe
is in th
boom.
Mar
gumpti
run by
into po
earlier
while
George

Background of a Demagogue

BY WILLSON WHITMAN

BY THE time the North could measure the menace of Huey Long, Louisiana's leader was dead and buried. To informed Southerners, Yankees have seemed equally slow on the uptake about Long's neighbor, Martin Dies.

Dies, lacking Long's intermittent but genuine concern for the common man, skipped the build-up of a state machine and started his career with the anti-New Deal Southern ring in Washington. Working with such Republicans as Clare Hoffman, Hamilton Fish, and J. Parnell Thomas, this ring—led by the ghost of John Nance Garner—has Cox of the Rules Committee for strategist and Byrd and Smith for business managers. Dies is its loud speaker, and well-meaning Yankees who ask the Rules Committee to abolish the Dies committee need to give more study to slick Southern teamwork.

Martin Dies comes from a country with a grievance. To repeat that the South has been a hard-up colony of the North since the Civil War may be tiresome, but as long as we have a freight differential it is true. A fascist-minded South is the product of freight differentials, wage differentials, and a financial discrimination which breeds more discrimination all along the line. You cannot convince a Southern business man that there is enough for everybody and that he need not grab from poor folks or jockey for privileges in Washington. In his experience there has never been enough since Sherman burned the factories and wrapped iron rails around pine trees.

You cannot even make a present-day Southerner fight big business on the ground that it is Yankee business; he knows when he's licked. Reversing the pattern of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the absentee landlord is now a Yankee corporation, with Simon Legree succeeded by a Southerner grateful for the job of overseer.

Texas, second richest state, should be least subject to the South's inferiority complex, but in Texas corporation influence is especially strong. In the Dies district, a region of cut-over timber, washed-out cotton fields, and pumped-out oil wells along the Louisiana line, the money is in the hands of big oil refiners, now enjoying a war boom.

Martin Dies grew up a politician. Southerners with gumption enough to see that the country's business is run by Northern corporations either move North or go into politics. In Dies's case the decision was made in an earlier generation; his father was a Congressman, and while young Martin was going to the university in Georgetown he was also learning the oily ropes of Texas

politics as his father's secretary. He was a Congressional baby when he succeeded to his father's seat.

Starting early and staying in office, the young Southern politician can give cards and spades to his Yankee colleagues. Southerners play for keeps, and if, like the Irish, they don't always play fair, it is because government has meant for them, too, the rule of a foreign conqueror. They learned corruption from the carpetbaggers and the occupying army of Ben Butler.

Southerners make much of grandfathers, but nobody in Texas knows about the Dies family two generations back. Martin Dies senior spoke with the self-consciousness and the ornery, acrid cynicism of a Southerner only a few jumps ahead of the white-trash class. An enlarged photograph of his father, prominent in the Dies office, testifies to the present Congressman's yearning for ancestral background.

Conscious that he is not quite "quality folk" by Southern standards, Martin Dies has to ally himself with the right side—the side of business, not of working people; of native-born white churchgoers, not of foreigners, Jews, or Negroes. Respectability means opposing not merely labor unions but "communistic" consumer cooperatives and social-betterment agencies.

Martin Dies is economically shrewd. Anybody is smart who can rise from a \$1,500-a-year small-town law practice to a \$10,000-a-year job, and hold the job. But really smart people learn how to get along without spending their own money, and Representative Dies has learned this. In addition to his Congressional salary, most of his expenses are chargeable to the taxpayers; so are his mistakes, even to libel costs. His ghost writer, J. B. Matthews, is paid by the people, although fees for magazine articles and lectures go to Mr. Dies. Bills for printing and mailing his propaganda are also paid from public funds.

Representative Dies is, presumably, too smart to take checks or stock or any other form of emolument from the corporations whose interests his policies serve, and which have supported him ever since he started his political career. But it is hard to rule out friendly family relations, and Dies's Uncle Jack is vice-president of the Humble Oil and Refining Company, a subsidiary of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey. The Dies committee has won approval from people willing to pay half a million dollars for its continuation; the chairman told the House as much when there was some opposition to a trifling \$100,000 appropriation.



Martin Dies

Martin Dies is a nationalist. That can represent progress in the backwoods, where a man from the next county is a foreigner. The people of Dies's district are 99 per cent native, and the white folks are mostly of "pure Anglo-Saxon descent." In Dies's boyhood the district included a penitentiary, afterward an insane asylum, which housed a few aliens from other parts of the state; but this would only suggest that a foreigner must be either criminal or crazy. Martin Dies didn't get abroad in the last war, and once proposed more stringent passport restrictions to keep Americans safe at home. He did little traveling in this country until his committee could foot the bill.

Dies's predecessor, Representative John C. Box, was credited with originating the politically tactful quota system of immigration; but Dies's own efforts have been to bar the gates completely against "foreign hordes" and to keep "America for the Americans." His father bitterly opposed Wilson's League of Nations. In 1934, when the nationalist tide was rising again, young Martin signed a magazine article entitled *Nationalism Spells Safety*, in which he confessed that he was "disgusted with all this unintelligible jargon about internationalism." In speeches made in recent years he has consistently seen less danger to the country from invasion by foreign armies than from "foreign influences" and "the invasion of foreign ideas."

Martin Dies is anti-labor. His father fulminated against the Colorado mine strike and thought that Champ Clark and Oscar Underwood, as well as Bryan and Wilson, had sold out to socialism. Martin junior began his Congressional career as Garner's fair-haired boy in the fight on the NRA and the wage-hour bills. Having proposed an investigation of sitdown strikes as "un-American," he naturally regarded his Committee on un-American Activities as an assignment to "scotch rattlesnakes" among C. I. O. organizers, blacklist members of aggressive unions, and smear the NLRB.

Martin Dies gives aid and comfort to anti-Semitic groups. He has made flowery speeches to Jewish organizations, but look at the anti-Semitic organizations, from the Klan to the Crusaders, which support him; read, in his book, how the Trojan horse was "led in by a refugee"; consider his committee's proposal to stop immigration from Europe at a time when the immigrants were mainly refugees from the Reich; and note that his statement, "This is a Christian nation," was approved by William Dudley Pelley as "Silvershirtism at its best."

Martin Dies is anti-Negro. When George Deatherage said to the Dies committee, "I am bigoted enough to believe in white supremacy," the chairman blushed at the word "bigoted." In his district the poll tax disfranchises some 70,000 Negroes. His committee has sought to identify poll-tax repeal with the Communist program.

Martin Dies is a master of ballyhoo. His father won praise from Yankee newspapers by calling Wilson a power-crazed czar, leading the country to ruin. By smearing labor and the New Deal, Martin junior made news acceptable to 85 per cent of the papers in the country. Like Dexter Fellowes, Dies had a show the editors enjoyed, with the G. O. P. elephant to do tricks for him. And his publicity is notable for perfect timing and smart use of space.

The timing has been right not only for elections but for appropriations; each time he wants more money he takes so many inches of type, and because he asked for millions, his biggest appropriation was headlined a "reduction." Good timing also distinguishes his warfare against labor and the New Deal. Attacks on union organizers are synchronized with contract negotiations, and red influence in the Administration is charged at the crises of debate on such important measures as neutrality repeal or price control.

Geographically, Dies press releases distribute their fire, promising juicy local revelations but confining discussion to distant dangers. In Washington Dies talks of German airports along the Rio Grande; in Texas, of threats to Philadelphia shipyards.

Quick to take advantage of or to invent news tie-ups, he is also good at balancing blunders with fresh promises and meeting a rebuke with impertinence. When the President criticized Dies's early use of his committee to defeat Murphy in Michigan, Dies managed in one sentence to insult the Chief Executive and a future Justice of the Supreme Court: "It would have been wrong to shield Governor Murphy simply because he was a Democrat and a strong friend of the President."

The most serious damage done by Dies publicity was of course to warn the Bund of impending investigations in time to permit removal of records. This pattern of the telegraphed punch—announcement of raids to come, followed by failure to find the missing papers—occurred

October
in city a
President
summon
investig
arrested
but Di
Marti
against
horse te
mized
Moscow
ures sho
Nazis;
vestigati
there w
Dies hi
rumore
again m
munist
propaga
ceeded,
States, i
out of
Americ
the Pel
brand.
and W
After
mislead
to obscu
consum
universi
ernmen
territory
for Mos
it was
"From
definite
Libertie
organiza
to a ma
directs
local leg
Final
of Com
the Die
Siamese
"I'm no
bed for
often i
brought
country
by Russ
warned
he must

in city after city, despite Justice Department protests and Presidential warnings. Bund leader Fritz Kuhn was not summoned by the committee until a year after a Bund investigation was promised. By that time he had been arrested by New York state authorities, on FBI evidence, but Dies claimed and still claims credit.

Martin Dies uses publicity to poison public opinion against Russia. His book says much about the Trojan-horse technique; from the start his investigation minimized Axis activities by emphasizing the menace of Moscow. In vain the President asserted, and Gallup figures showed, that the country wanted an investigation of Nazis; and Maury Maverick warned that political investigations "always complimented the Germans because there were so many Germans but gave the Russians hell." Dies himself said for publication that Nazi influence, rumored to be backed by "large industrialists" (never again mentioned), would be considered first, with Communist influence second, and "Spanish and Chinese propaganda third." Nevertheless, the investigation proceeded, until Germany declared war on the United States, in the proportions of the Dies book. Twenty-one out of twenty-eight chapters of "The Trojan Horse in America" are on communism, two on the Bund, one on the Pelley brand of fascism, and one on the Italian brand. Japan doesn't even get a chapter, while Falange and White Ukrainian activities go unmentioned.

After false emphasis comes confusion as a device to mislead. The multiplicity of Dies's charges was bound to obscure real issues; the investigation was spread over consumer groups, charities, relief associations, a Negro university. Dies even offered to investigate various government agencies and did send investigators into TVA territory, while he himself went to Hollywood to hunt for Moscow agents. Where no affiliation could be found, it was always possible to leave a dirty thumb-print: "From the evidence before us we are not in a position definitely to state whether or not the American Civil Liberties Union can properly be classed as a Communist organization." But "linking" and "branding" come easy to a man capable of asserting that "Joseph Stalin . . . directs an international spy ring with one hand and a local legislative lobby for cheaper milk with the other."

Finally, a favorite Dies device is simple substitution of Communist for Nazi, or vice versa, in keeping with the Dies doctrine that the "red and brown Führers" are Siamese twins. In an early debate on the Bund he said, "I'm no alarmist. I'm not inclined to look under every bed for a Communist." Throughout the hearings he often interrupted or led witnesses to say that facts brought out about the Axis must have a Communist counterpart—"and of course the same tactics are pursued by Russia." During the Mexican elections of 1940 he warned of red plots to intervene by force of arms, when he must have known that the threats of violence were

coming from the fascist supporters of General Almazán, who was in turn supported by the oil companies hiring Dies's Uncle Jack.

Martin Dies makes a dangerous appeal to the ignorant. His flag-waving oratory was made to order for Hearst headlines; his accents appeal to joiners, and joiners appeal to him. At one time he planned a "League for Peace and Americanism," similar to Senator Reynolds's Vindicators, which was to agitate for "jobs for Americans" and the deportation of aliens and against immigration and the sending of American troops to fight on foreign soil.

Having been feted by Westchester society, hailed at a hotel dinner in New York as "the Sir Galahad of American politics," and mentioned for the Presidency by Father Coughlin, Dies must be excused for cherishing the highest hopes for his own future. Nobody except him really thinks he could be President; he couldn't even attain his early ambition to be party leader in the House. But his fan mail has Congress scared.

To sentimental patriots, the favorite Dies appeal is that of the martyr. His life is threatened, his children may be kidnapped, his files must be guarded because he has fearlessly exposed the enemies of our country. Any defeat is due to the enemy. When the House declined his proposal to investigate strikes, "this showed the power wielded by the Communists and their fellow-travelers during that period." When ninety-eight clergymen and religious leaders asked Congress to cut off the Dies funds, they "had permitted themselves to be used by Browder." When Treasury agents discovered that Dies owed back taxes, he told admirers, "We are facing a serious situation. . . ."

Martin Dies's committee is a dangerous approach to an American Gestapo. On Dies's own testimony it does not conflict with the FBI because it investigates the strictly legal activities of persons who cannot be indicted as criminals, persons described in the records as "well-meaning innocents," honest liberals, and "ordinary middle-class citizens." But Dies expense vouchers show payments to informers and spies, trucking charges for the seizure of records, and rentals for listening-posts and dictaphones. At committee headquarters it is admitted that lists of names will be furnished to responsible authorities who make proper written application to the chairman—that is, will be furnished to employers compiling black lists.

The committee urges its own black list upon government agencies. One war-agency executive says that Dies intimidation now forces administrators to hire mediocre, "safe" help in preference to more efficient progressives, because you can't have inquisitors disrupting the staff. *Martin Dies is hostile to progress in government.* He has argued repeatedly for "class tolerance," meaning, apparently, acceptance by Americans of fixed financial

and social stratification. He has devoted much committee time to investigating persons who worked against child labor and for social-security laws and other elementary reforms. His present hope is to use the war to defeat reform; "Many people think we can preserve our social gains and defeat Hitler. It cannot be done," he told the House.

Naturally he feels that minorities have no rights worth mentioning. "For years they [the Communists] have been building up this utterly senseless idea of civil rights," he complains. He has long urged outlawing the Communist Party and all organizations "linked" to it by his committee. "In France they're executing the Communists," he noted with approval, shortly before France fell. Nor are majority rights, as expressed at the polls, too sacred to the Dies mind. Americans, Dies is fond of saying, derive their fundamental rights "from God and not from governments, dictators, kings, and majorities." Here the danger is the assumed partnership between Dies and Deity; bouncing up after a Roosevelt reproof, he declared, "I shall not swerve from the path of duty as God gives me the light to see it."

Martin Dies is opposed to the present war. But lacking the courage of his father, who lost his Congressional seat after voting against World War I, he won't admit it. The present Congressman Dies is smart enough to support the war where it shows; he has supported Roosevelt the same way. He managed to snipe at England in

speeches while voting for lend-lease and has admitted that he does not favor lend-lease aid to Russia. His bitterness against the Soviet Union brought from Congressman Sumners a reminder that one doesn't insult an ally. As for the Japanese, his press statement that committee revelations might have prevented Pearl Harbor was officially denied by the State Department and was unsupported by subsequent committee publications. In a speech delivered at New Orleans in October, 1941, he dismissed the Japanese as "just a bluff."

No conscientious objector to war, he can fairly be called an isolationist. Everything in his philosophy opposes a people's war and will oppose a peace based on collective security. In 1938 he was warning that Communist propaganda for collective security might get us into war; his committee was especially bitter against the Loyalists in Spain. As late as 1940 he was investigating, or promising to investigate, the efforts of the Chinese, French, and British to make America unneutral.

Texans are fighting folk who ask about a man's own war record, in or out of Congress. In the last war Martin Dies was too young to be drafted, although many young Texans of his age enlisted. He is not too old for the present war, but his health doesn't even permit him to attend closely to his Congressional job. Suspicious Southerners note that the Dies health is variable, sending him, in time of political crisis, to the hospital, to Florida, or to his Texas farm.

J. B. Matthews—the Informer

BY RICHARD H. ROVERE

J. B. MATTHEWS, a former Communist, is the strong right arm of Martin Dies. In private he is Dies's closest adviser; in public his most fawning admirer. Although he bears only the unimposing title of Research Director, he does more work than all the regular committee members put together. If Matthews had not come on the scene late in 1938, the committee might have been voted out of existence. It was fast becoming an embarrassment to Congress and a joke to the press. Matthews's testimony, a three-day orgy of self-reproach, put it back on the front pages, and his work as a staff member has kept it there ever since. In return he has been given a free hand to run the greatest smear campaign in American history.

A tall, rangy man, domineering and endlessly argumentative, Matthews is ideally suited to the job. As red-baiters, Dies and the rest of the committee know what they want, but they have no grasp of the movements they pretend to investigate. Matthews has known most of

them from the inside and knows just when and how he can scuttle the truth. Left to themselves, Dies, Starnes, and Thomas would bungle things beyond repair; they could make no sense at all of the left-wing documents which are Matthews's tools. But Matthews is an industrious fanatic who will burrow forever in impossible magazines like the *Party Organizer*. In almost every way Dies and Matthews are as conveniently mated as Jack Spratt and his wife. Dies has political ability and power; Matthews has energy and knowledge. Dies is easygoing, but he has a way with the public; Matthews has the intensity and craftiness for behind-the-scenes intrigue. In their personal relations Dies looks up to Matthews as a man of sound religion and vast learning who, unlike most intellectuals, is willing to make reactionary politics a career. He was pleased as punch when Matthews, in writing "The Trojan Horse in America," stuffed the Troy metaphor with high-sounding allusions from Greek history. Matthews, although he privately considers Dies

an oaf,
Dies's p
for his

Most
their fo
own h
it has
as many
probabl
be a po
rightness
mised b
sentime
those of
best yea
has alw
he soon
but as r
now inc
thing r
Matth
ment of
blood
Director
eral he
crusade
fitting
his files
rifled m
zines, s
1937, M
a Comm
himself
again t
the rad
raphy h
whateve
dice the
as any
again:
successf
their di
Commun
follows
support
But, of
is why
Josep
ago in F
and a S
politics,
Matth
Wilmor
he fell
liberals

an oaf, is willing to play the sycophant in order to use Dies's political prestige, achieved largely with his help, for his own ends.

Most informers are moved either by spite against their former friends or by a simple desire to save their own hides. Matthews is inspired by a spite so great that it has become an almost disinterested zeal. If he were, as many suppose, nothing but an opportunist, he would probably be hoist by his own petard, but he happens to be a political psychopath who believes implicitly in the rightness of his mission. Because he was first compromised by the Communists and then cast off by them, his sentiments were, in the first flush of anger, not unlike those of a lady who has given her guarded virtue and the best years of her life to a faithless lover. Being a man who has always lived by religions and ideologies, however, he soon came to see his old associates not only as persons but as representatives of a set of ideas. And so his hatred now includes every piece of the Marxist dogma and anything remotely like it. When the Dies committee asks Matthews for something with which to smear a government official, the chances are that it is just out for the blood of another New Dealer. But for the Research Director the task is one of high importance. Every liberal he uncovers is another Turk brought low in his crusade to save the Republic from what he calls, with fitting vagueness, "the general idea of collectivism." If his files, which consist principally of old letterheads, rifled mailing lists, and back numbers of radical magazines, show that a man spoke up for Loyalist Spain in 1937, Matthews will not hesitate to write him down as a Communist in 1942. He may not hold with such logic himself, but that is not the point. He has said time and again that he considers it weak-minded to distinguish the radical heresies one from another. In his autobiography he wrote: "I believe that . . . a demagogue, by whatever political name, who deliberately seeks to prejudice the public mind against business . . . is as dangerous as any Communist to the welfare of America." And again: "I know that conservatives who would oppose successfully the left-wing illusions of our time must drop their divisive interpretations of what lies back of the Communist and Socialist movements." From which it follows that for Matthews it is enough that a man once supported Loyalist Spain or spoke harshly of the utilities. But, of course, it is not enough for the public, and that is why "Communist" or "fellow-traveler" is added.

Joseph Brown Matthews was born forty-eight years ago in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, to a former school teacher and a Singer sewing-machine salesman. Republican in politics, Methodist in religion, the family wanted young Matthews cut to their pattern. But at Asbury College, in Wilmore, Kentucky, where he studied ancient languages, he fell indirectly under the influence of the Christian liberals of his day, men like David Starr Jordan and

John R. Mott. He spent the years of the First World War teaching their gospel, along with some arithmetic and penmanship, at a Chinese school in Java called Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan. On the side he did some missionary work with the Javanese and mastered enough of the Malay language to render the Methodist hymnal and a book by Henry Van Dyke into that difficult tongue.

His stay in Java outlasted the war by a few years. He returned here to devote his full time to the study and teaching of the antiquities. At Columbia he worked under A. V. Williams Jackson, the great orientalist, and he taught Hebrew, Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, Arabic, and Aramaic at several freshwater colleges in the South and Middle West. Academic colleagues recall that he had a quick, if conventional, linguistic mind. He still maintains a scholarly interest in languages, and occasionally, when there is not much going on around the Dies committee, he bolsters his \$7,200-a-year income by doing some translations for the State Department. But in that period—the mid-



J. B. Matthews

—the middle twenties—his social conscience was developing rapidly, and he found himself more and more concerned with the problems of war and race relations. He joined several pacifist organizations, and in 1924, while teaching at Scarritt College, he did a yeoman's job lining up Tennessee votes for the La Follette-Wheeler ticket.

If it had not been for the unfortunate sequence in which he received two telegrams on a June day in 1929, Matthews might be spending his middle age as a university scholar of modest abilities and liberal inclinations. One wire was from the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a New York pacifist group, and it offered him the post of executive secretary. The other, which came a few hours later, was from Drew University, a Methodist school in New Jersey, and it asked him to accept the chair of Hebrew. Matthews would have preferred to take the teaching job and help the cause in his spare time, but he had already committed himself to the non-resisters by the time the second telegram arrived. Today he traces his subsequent misfortunes back to that fateful day, and his victims may well do the same with theirs.

As a radical leader in Tennessee Matthews had shown a real flair for oratory and some facility as a writer, but he had no opportunity to try his hand at the kind of

palace politics which lends spice and a sense of importance to so many unimportant movements. In New York he discovered that his talent for meddling verged almost on genius. When he testified before the Dies committee he named ninety-four left-wing groups with which he had been associated over a period of seven years. Five months after he went to work for the pacifists, he joined the Socialist Party. A year later he was almost expelled by the Socialists for consorting too much with the Communists. Like Heywood Broun, who was then his friend, he always made his exit by the door to the left. Indeed, he was often so unreasonably radical, so eager to flaunt his views and boast of his daring, that many people who knew him then believe now that he was a provocateur instructed by the government or some other agency to enter left-wing movements and commit their members to incriminating statements. On the basis of present evidence that seems a mistaken view of the matter. Extremes have always attracted him. Today he is more bitterly and proudly reactionary than Martin Dies himself.

In any event, Matthews flourished as a politician, and kept on moving closer to the Communists. "The winter of 1932," he has written, "found me prepared to become a full-fledged fellow-traveler." He had long since abandoned the meek philosophy of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, which still employed him, and in the Socialist Party he associated himself with a group that was dissatisfied with the moderate policies of Norman Thomas and wished to replace him with a leader who would be more willing to cooperate with the Communists. He went to Russia in the summer of 1932, the year of the great famine in the Ukraine. "I even saw with my own eyes such appalling sights of poverty as would move the coldest heart." When he came back he wrote an article, published in the *Daily Worker*, denying that there had been any famine. He now says that neither then nor later was he an actual member of the Communist Party. Probably not, but as he is always so quick to point out, the line that separates Communists who carry membership cards from those who do not is all but invisible. In 1933 Earl Browder had enough confidence in him to make him chairman of the United States Congress Against War, later the American League Against War and Fascism, and still later the American League for Peace and Democracy. By far the most ambitious Communist enterprise ever set up in this country, the American League became, in the years before the war, an important instrument of Russian foreign policy. It is unthinkable that anyone but a trustworthy Communist would have been allowed to lead it.

The material rewards of service to radical causes are seldom great. Matthews had a wife and children to support. He solved the problem in 1932 by accepting a part-time executive position with Consumers' Research at a salary that took care of his family's needs. Con-

sumers' Research was radical only in the sense that it was a help to the little man and a nuisance to business. Its director, F. J. Schlinck, had no political connections and believed in government by the technological elite. Nevertheless, Matthews felt that he could work there without damage to his Marxist conscience. If anyone scoffed, he elaborated a theory, strictly his own, of "consumer communism." Apparently he was convincing, for several other Communists got jobs at Consumers' Research, and by 1935 they had decided either to gain control of it or wreck it and start a movement of their own. A strike of the employees was called in the autumn of that year, and Matthews, as an executive, was on the spot. The issues of the strike are still obscured by the policies of both sides, but a few facts are clear. The strikers had a legitimate grievance. Many technicians were paid only \$13 a week and some had been fired for complaining. On the other hand, no one could doubt that the Communist leaders were moved less by pity for the worker than by envy of the organization's success. They will always endure meager rations for a cause they want to succeed. At any rate the strike was a partial success. The strikers did not win their demands, but they won enough public sympathy to start a rival organization, Consumers' Union. But Matthews, whose desire for security proved greater than his revolutionary fervor, had fought the strikers bitterly. His position with the Communists was intolerable; he quit them for good.

For two years before he turned up on the witness stand of the Dies committee Matthews meditated and sulked. After all the wrangling and conniving of the past ten years he looked fondly back at his old Kentucky home and saw great virtues in it. Nostalgia mounted to passion and then, exultantly, he wrote: "I had an inheritance of conservative traditions. Now, after almost twenty-five years of political nomadism, I am back at the beginning. But political and economic conservatism is no longer merely an inheritance. It is a personal faith." Still a joiner, he began looking for movements in which he could express his new convictions. He found plenty. Instead of denouncing fascists from Communist platforms, he began denouncing Communists from fascist platforms. He became a star speaker for American Patriots, Inc., an organization which was run by Allen Zoll. He worked at the League for Constitutional Government, distributor of such items as the "Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion" and Elizabeth Dilling's "Red Network." His own turgid autobiography, "Odyssey of a Fellow-Traveler," was published by John Cecil, who as head of the National Immigration Board spends his energies trying to keep out anti-Nazi refugees on the ground that they are all Jewish Communists. An article by Matthews was published in *Anti-Komintern*, organ of the German Foreign Office. Another was proudly displayed by *Social Justice*.

In Washington Matthews has become more than just the brains of the Dies committee. Even if the committee is run out of business, he is likely to turn up again as the guiding spirit of some other Dies campaign. His success in working for Dies has made him a tower of strength for the whole Tory bloc in the House, and he

has had a hand in several of their campaigns, particularly those against labor. Matthews has come a long way. The former fighter for Negro rights is a henchman of poll-tax Congressmen; the former professor of Hebrew is a friend of anti-Semites; the former pacifist, Socialist, and Communist works with fascists.

History of a Hoax

BY KENNETH G. CRAWFORD

FACT-FINDING through the process of investigation by Congressional committees is one of the necessities of our form of government. Framers of the Constitution wisely made provision for use of the subpoena power by the legislative branch as a way of getting information needed for intelligent law-making. This power has been used often and, for the most part, wisely. On occasion it has been used brilliantly.

Indeed, brilliant use of the inquisitorial power of Congress has established one of the American government's brightest traditions and obscured occasional misuse of the subpoena by Congressional committees. The tradition sparkles with such names as Pujo, Hughes, Walsh, Pecora, and Black. The Teapot Dome investigation exposed graft and put a stop to it. The Senate banking investigation exposed abuses in the financial system and brought reforms.

We have come to think of Congressional investigation as a wholly satisfactory way of periodic self-examination. If the body politic has accumulated toxic waste, investigation will indicate a purge. If there is a malignant growth, it will indicate surgery. We shall not go too far wrong, our government processes will not be allowed to become too obsolescent, if the people's representatives have access to this X-ray.

The Special House Committee on un-American Activities, otherwise known as the Dies committee, has committed many sins since its formation in 1938. It has shown contempt for the constitutionally guaranteed rights of the people. Its methods have been a disgrace to the Congress whose delegated power it misuses. Its conclusions have been so warped as to justify the charge of deliberate falsification. But its greatest sin has been its sin against the tradition of Congressional investigation.

As outlined by Representative Martin Dies in the spring session of 1938, when the resolution that later established the committee's power was introduced, the purposes of the investigation were perfectly proper. The sweeping nature of the resolution itself was criticized at the time by several members of the House. Never-

theless, the broad grant of power was indicated by the character of the subject to be investigated. Dies said he merely wanted to look into the activities of such subversive organizations as the German-American Bund.

Maury Maverick, then a brash young Congressman from Dies's Texas, warned that the House could expect "the greatest fishing expedition Congress has ever undertaken," but the resolution was adopted by voice vote. This resolution is still the committee's basic grant of power. It provides for "an investigation of (1) the extent, character, and objects of un-American propaganda activities in the United States; (2) the diffusion within the United States of subversive and un-American propaganda that is instigated from foreign countries or of a domestic origin and attacks the principle of the form of government as guaranteed by our Constitution; and (3) all other questions in relation thereto that would aid Congress in any remedial legislation."

Four years have elapsed since this fishing expedition started. The newspaper space covered by accounts of the committee's exploits probably would blanket the whole state of Texas. From the point of view of Chairman Dies, the inquiry has been successful beyond his wildest dreams. He is a national figure, not just an obscure gentleman from Texas with a talent for legislative log-rolling and cloakroom banter. His committee has heckled, harassed, and obstructed the New Deal, with which Dies has never been sympathetic. It has even had a hand in defeating New Deal candidates for important elective office. It has accumulated so much favorable publicity that members of the House, many if not most of whom would like to choke off an investigation that has become systematic persecution of liberals and liberal causes, including New Dealers and their projects, are afraid to come out against it.

About all this one finds little difference of opinion in Washington. Dies has a small group of articulate defenders and apologists in the House, led by the spitfire reactionary from Georgia, Eugene Cox, but he has lost caste with the rank and file of Congressmen. Yet most members of the House, it is safe to assume, credit him

with one worth-while achievement. Most of them will tell you that Dies has done the nation, and even the cause of liberalism, a service by revealing and making generally known the operating methods of the Communists—how they steer front organizations composed principally of liberal innocents, how they burrow into the unions, and how they serve the foreign policy of the Kremlin.

If Dies could properly be credited with this, then many non-Marxist liberals probably would agree that he had performed a service. Actually, Dies accomplished no such thing. The American Communists have revealed themselves in these last four years. No liberal, however innocent, is innocent enough to misunderstand an organization that shifted from collective security to isolationism and back again while Russia was first combating the Nazis by peaceful propaganda, then entering into a non-aggression pact with Berlin, and finally fighting the Nazis magnificently from the White to the Black Sea.

A few members of the House, moreover, harbor the delusion that Dies helped smash the German-American Bund and the native fascist movement. Here again, the smashing was accomplished by events. Native nightshirt men like William Dudley Pelley went their way rejoicing, helped by the publicity Dies had given them, until the war made their causes and methods outlaw and until the FBI and the Justice Department moved in on them. Dies's accomplishments in the field of fascist-smashing can be accurately measured by the fact that he never disturbed Father Charles E. Coughlin, spiritual center of the native movement. It can be further measured by the fact that most of the twenty-eight pro-Axis leaders now awaiting trial for conspiracy to undermine the morale of United States armed forces were never troubled by him.

No one who has watched it in operation, close up, will make the popular mistake of crediting the Dies committee with achievement of its publicly announced objectives—exposure of Communist and fascist influences in the United States. It is true that the Dies committee questioned both Earl Browder, secretary of the Communist Party of the United States, and Fritz Kuhn, head of the German-American Bund, and that

both were convicted of crimes and sent to jail after appearing before the committee. But the prosecuting agency in both cases was the Department of Justice, and the evidence presented was dug up by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Almost certainly both prosecutions would have been won had there never been a Dies committee.

The fact of the matter is—and it has been clear ever since the first month after the committee started functioning—that Dies has not been trying to destroy either communism or fascism so much as the New Deal and organized labor. He soon learned what he may or may not have known when he started—that there was only an incidental connection between what he said he was doing and what he was actually doing. To accomplish his twofold purpose it was necessary to discredit liberals of various shades, all allied with the Roosevelt New Deal reform movement, but unconnected with the native fascists or Axis-inspired nightshirt organizations on the right and uninfluenced by the Communist Party on the left.

Had Dies actually exposed the operations of the Communist Party, he would have destroyed his greatest asset. It served his purpose better to keep the line between communism and non-revolutionary liberalism as hazy as possible. To make the obvious distinction between liberals bent on gradualist reform by legal, democratic means and Marxian purists getting ready to inherit a revolution would have been to dilute the red paint Dies found so effective for smearing everyone outside his own reactionary circle.

In his report on the Union for Democratic Action, a non-Communist organization founded to promote the cause of intervention when the Communists were singing an isolationist tune, Dies came close to attacking liberals as such. He was saved from this extremity, however, by the trusty files of J. B. Matthews, the committee's resourceful chief investigator. These files contain the names of thousands of Americans who have belonged to, received mail from, or been officers of organizations like the American League for Peace and Democracy. These organizations, many of them like the American League

Dies Hearst Griffin McCormick



now defunct, are classified as Communist fronts by the Dies committee. If it finds a list of names in the files of such an organization or on a yellowed letterhead, the Dies committee proceeds on the assumption that it is a list of Communists or of Communist stooges.

In the membership of the Union for Democratic Action were, of course, many who had belonged to so-called front organizations, as almost all men of goodwill did back in the dim, dead united-front days. There were also a few who, like Matthews himself, were former Communists or confirmed fellow-travelers. However, it was patently silly, as even the *New York Times* pointed out, to call the pro-war U. D. A. a front for the Communists. Moreover, some of the organizers of the U. D. A. had no records of past affiliation with any liberal or Communist-front organizations. In at least one case, to the certain knowledge of this writer, Matthews solved this problem simply by allocating to a U. D. A. member some affiliations that never existed with some organizations the victim had never even heard of.

The Dies method of conviction by association was, as usual, carried one step farther in the case of the U. D. A. Since the U. D. A., in association with the *New Republic*, had published a supplement designed to expose the records of isolationist, anti-New Deal, anti-labor Congressmen and thus contribute to their defeat in the fall elections, the Dies committee report implied that the New Deal was to be the beneficiary of a Communist plot against Congress. This implication was then made explicit by the *Chicago Tribune* and some other newspapers, whose bias against Roosevelt is nearly rabid and whose attitude toward the war is not far from neutral. By a tenuous chain of association going back to the heyday of the American League for Peace and Democracy the New Deal of 1942 also became Communist.

This has been the method of the Dies committee almost from the start. Application of the method is revealing of its purpose. Organized labor, particularly the C. I. O. has been as obvious an intended victim as the New Deal. Communists in the labor movement and in the New Deal Administration—and there have been

and still are some, more in the C. I. O. than in the government, but still a few in relatively unimportant bureaucratic posts in Washington—have been victimized only incidentally.

Dies's sympathies have always been with the extreme conservatives. He was an alien-baiter long before he became a labor-baiter. Although he tolerated the New Deal, even strung along with it during the Roosevelt honeymoon of 1933, he started voting the line of his fellow-Texan, John Garner, as soon as it became apparent that the President meant what he said about basic liberal reform. Dies has wielded the power of his committee as a guerrilla fighter uses a machete in every campaign since, and including, the Congressional and state campaigns of 1938.

There has been nothing subtle about Dies's political axing. He has gone in swinging and laid about him without regard for the niceties of political usage. His first victim was Frank Murphy, who in the fall of 1938 had come through the sitdown-strike crisis and was seeking reelection as governor of Michigan. Dies's method here was to permit Murphy's political enemies to fill the committee record with unsupported charges that Murphy was a dupe of the Communists, who had tried to turn the automobile plants over to radical strikers. Similar treatment was given Elmer Benson, Farm-Labor governor of Minnesota. Both were beaten. An attempt was made to defeat Culbert Olson for governor of California, but in this case a crude job of attempted character assassination failed to kill.

More recently Dies has worked on Leon Henderson, calling him an "ex-crackpot" and other names, all eagerly picked up by the Axis radio for short-wave propaganda; on Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, accusing her of shielding Harry Bridges; on Attorney General Francis Biddle, charging him with obstructing the work of the committee; and on Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, accusing him of virtually all crimes. Dies's attacks on government officials have been timed to do the most possible harm. Henderson, for example, was hauled over the coals while his price-control bill was pending before the House, and sweeping charges that

Coughlin Fish Smith Dilling

Pelley

Winrod

Kuhn



Communists held high government positions were released while the neutrality-repeal debate was in progress.

These latter charges—that the Communists have infiltrated the government with the help of the New Deal and are about to foment revolution from within—have become Dies's principal theme. In his lectures, for which he is reported to receive as much as \$500 apiece plus expenses, and from which he is said to have accumulated a tidy little fortune, he sends shivers down the spines of his hearers by rolling the Trojan horse to the very door of the Capitol.

Congress and the Department of Justice finally called this bluff of Dies's in 1941. A provision was written into the Justice Department appropriation bill directing that at least \$100,000 be spent on an investigation of government employees who were "members of subversive organizations or advocates of overthrow of the federal government." After spending much more than \$100,000 and investigating some 4,000 cases, 1,121 of them based on complaints from the Dies committee, the Justice Department finally has made its report.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation under J. Edgar Hoover, who can scarcely be called a fellow-traveler or suspected of shielding the comrades, made thorough investigations, but only two employees were fired as a result of its reports. An interdepartmental committee appointed by Biddle to oversee the investigation said, in effect, that the Dies list was a phony, that the investigation had wasted good time and money, that it had interfered with the morale of government workers, and that the government had been found to be free of subversive influences.

Dies growled that Biddle was welcoming Bundsmen and members of Communist-front organizations into the government and prepared to carry on as usual. How much harm the exposure of his Trojan-horse hoax has done him remains questionable. The press from the very start of his investigation has been for the most part uncritical of Dies's methods and extremely generous with its space in reporting his findings.

However, Dies's press has not been as good this year as previously, and exposure of his horse as something made out of imaginative plush probably won't do him any good, particularly since it followed another dramatic demonstration of the great investigator's irresponsibility. This demonstration was made by David B. Vaughn, an economist employed by the Board of Economic Warfare. Vaughn was one of thirty-five persons in the BEW who were branded as members or former members of front organizations in a letter from Dies to Vice-President Henry A. Wallace, chairman of the board. Vaughn had worked for the Irving Trust Company, 1 Wall Street, and had been a member of nothing more subversive than the Baptist church before coming to Washington. Dies, it developed, was thinking of David

Vaughn, once a director of the American League for Peace and Democracy and not a government employee.

So Vaughn sued Dies for \$75,000 on the theory that, since the accusation made against him was originally set forth in a letter, not in an official House document, and was released to the newspapers, it was not privileged and therefore not proof against libel action. Dies huffed and puffed but finally agreed to settle out of court. He would, he said, pay Vaughn's legal expenses and make a public apology. He did both. But then he nicked the House Accounts Committee for the \$500-plus involved in the settlement. He escaped personal liability narrowly, however. The vote to bail him out in the Accounts Committee was six to five.

It has been the practice of the committee, when it felt itself slipping, to get out another report. After the first two years it all but gave up holding hearings because their unfairness was too obvious. Since then there have been a White Paper, which purported to show up the Nazi propaganda machine in the United States but proved little beyond the known fact that Hans Thomsen, chargé d'affaires of the German embassy, was pro-German, a Yellow Paper on Japan, which was shown up by Congressman Tom Eliot of Massachusetts as a rehash of old stuff available in the Congressional Library dressed up with E. Phillips Oppenheim touches, and similar studies on various phases of what the committee treats as un-American phenomena.

The most revealing report the Dies committee ever

Wasted Money

"I am convinced beyond all doubt that the net results of the labors of the Committee to Investigate un-American Activities is harmful to the nation's war effort. It has excited suspicion unduly, created distrust and disunity, and embarrassed and hampered the orderly functioning of important departments of our government. I am extremely fearful that it may by some injudicious or intemperate outburst bring disaster to the cause of the United Nations.

"Its record is one in which the Congress can have no pride, and its procedure at times has been violative of what we Americans like to call fair play. No longer can I condone its misdeeds, and having no hope that it will reform, I hope its continuance will not be authorized. Money appropriated for expenditures by that committee is worse than wasted. I shall vote 'nay'."—Representative Herman P. Eberharter, Pennsylvania.

wrote was never published—or rather it was published in a form so expurgated that it bore only a pale resemblance to the original. It was a report subscribed to by Dies and his fellow-travelers, who have always been in the majority on the committee, attacking "Marxist atheists . . . who masquerade under the name of liberal" and charging that these atheists run the New Deal. It said they were cloaking their totalitarian ambitions in the seductive raiment of reform but actually were trying to regiment labor under the National Labor Relations Board, agriculture under the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, industry under the Securities and Exchange Commission, and so on. Centralization of power in Washington was called the first stage of Washington dictatorship and Roosevelt "the Kerensky who precedes the dictator."

The three New Dealers who had been placed on the committee in successive attempts to reform Dies—Representatives John Dempsey of New Mexico, Jerry Voorhis of California, and Joseph Casey of Massachusetts—threatened to bring out a minority report if this tract were published by the majority. As a result, the report was toned down and finally brought out as a unanimous recommendation that the committee be continued. However, excerpts from the original were published by *The Nation*.

These excerpts showed, more clearly than anything that has ever been written by or about the Dies committee, just what it had been up to. The report was, of course, written by Matthews in an attempt to put an ideological base under the feet of Dies and his anti-liberal associates on the committee and in the House. Matthews has written not only the Dies committee reports but many if not all of Dies's speeches and magazine articles, and one book. In fact, the Dies committee probably could be called with more accuracy the Matthews committee.

Dies almost certainly had no very clear idea of what he would do with his authority and his first \$25,000 when he got them and took up the hunt for subversives where it had been dropped by a succession of House investigators—Hamilton Fish of New York, John McCormack of Massachusetts, and Samuel Dickstein of New York. It was to prevent Dickstein from continuing with the investigation that the Southern crowd, which found itself in control of the House after 1932, made Dies chairman of the committee. All the previous investigators had found the hunt an unrewarding enterprise.

Dies had no better success at first. His original appropriation was not large enough to finance very much of a show. To conserve his meager exchequer he had to depend principally on volunteer witnesses who would pay their own expenses, and most of the volunteers were wackies. John Metcalfe, a reporter for the *Chicago Times*, was Dies's first paid investigator and

first full-dress witness. He had joined the German-American Bund to find out what it was all about and presented some pretty sensational testimony. But the newspapers didn't give it much of a play. It was not until John Frey, head of the Metal Trades Department of the A. F. of L., turned up with a statement about Communists in the rival C. I. O. that Dies hit the publicity jackpot.

Frey's testimony showed him what he needed and what the press wanted—the two things were identical. Ever since then he has borne down heavily on charges of communism in the C. I. O., often timing exposure of leaders in specific unions to hit the newspapers simultaneously with the start of contract negotiations. This happened, for example, in the important Harvester negotiations. But there wasn't enough specific material on communism in the C. I. O. and communism in the government to keep the hungry presses fed. There wasn't enough, that is, until Matthews appeared as if from heaven, to serve first as a witness and then as a paid employee of the committee. He knew the comrades and their methods, and he was willing to tell all.

Increasingly under fire in the last few months, Dies has taken to putting his foot in his mouth with painful regularity. He recently boasted from the seclusion of his Texas home that he was about to expose a gigantic spy ring, but nothing has come of it; he stated flatly that Axis diplomats had protested to the State Department about the committee's activities, but the department said it had received no such protests; he demanded that the Department of Justice place 17,000 German Americans under surveillance, only to be informed that this would require an army of 51,000 FBI agents doing nothing else. Things have not been going well, but another report, this one on German espionage, sabotage, and propaganda, is in the works, and Dies apparently is relying on it to assure the customary renewal and \$100,000 appropriation next year.

The fact is that Dies could not bring out a comprehensive report on Nazi-inspired propaganda activities without mentioning his friends. One of his closest friends and collaborators is Hamilton Fish, whose connections with Viereck brought him close to the fountainhead of the pre-Pearl Harbor Nazi propaganda in this country. Inevitably, the line followed by Matthews and Dies has led them into tolerance for if not active collaboration with the native fascists. Some of Matthews's own stuff has turned up in their publications. And even though the extreme anti-democrats, Jew-baiters, and pro-Axis elements have been driven under cover by the circumstances of war, they have not been rooted out. Coughlin and his gang are still at large. So are the more respectable and therefore more dangerous of the hot-headed former isolationists, or, if you please, non-

interventionists, for whom the *Chicago Tribune*, the *New York Daily News*, the *Washington Times-Herald*, Senator Burton K. Wheeler, and Charles A. Lindbergh are spokesmen or potential spokesmen.

The Dies committee has now spent a total of \$385,000. It has tried to discredit scores of earnest, useful citizens. Any incidental contribution it has made will not

compensate for the violence it has done the tradition of Congressional inquiry. Of all the Congressional committees that have operated as inquisitorial agencies in the last four years, including the Truman committee, the Dies committee probably will be longest remembered. It will be a smear on the record of New Deal Congresses so long as the record remains.

Whose Trojan Horse?

BY WILL CHASAN

NO SINGLE circumstance, not even the invigorating presence of German funds, has helped more than the Dies committee to facilitate the growth of an American fascism. The committee, whose capacity for evil is still largely unappreciated, has created for American fascists the immensely useful and provocative myth of a national government swarming with Communists, demented professors, and aliens. It has subscribed explicitly to the fiction that the United States is in danger of a red revolution, thus lending authority and a new potency to the traditional fascist appeal. It has, as Vice-President Wallace once charged, aroused the doubts and angers on which fascism thrives.

One's natural impulse is to believe that the committee has performed this ignoble service unwittingly. But both the committee's chairman and its research director are too keen politically, too cynically aware of their effects, to allow so amiable an interpretation. The record of the committee itself is overwhelmingly consistent; if it does not prove that those responsible for the committee's policies are fascist-minded, it leaves no doubt that they have intentionally sponsored the distortions and prejudices which are fascism's leit-motif.

American fascists, quick to sense the value of the Dies committee, have been its eager, staunch, and unscrupulous defenders. They have gathered thousands of petitions for its continuation, acclaimed its "statesmanlike" and "patriotic" qualities, and with charges of communism have badgered many of its Congressional opponents into silence. With a zeal which would have been incongruous had the Committee to Investigate un-American Activities been living up to its name, they regularly exhorted their followers to support "this great American protective movement." When Wallace condemned Dies, Father Coughlin urged *Social Justice* readers "to employ their leisure moments" to write Dies "letters of encouragement." He suggested that a million letters to Dies would be "an answer to those who are bent on destroying him." George Deatherage, who ostensibly was investigated by the committee,

mailed out franked copies of a speech by Senator Reynolds praising its work. Gerald Smith's Committee of One Million collected 400,000 signatures on petitions urging Congress to renew the Dies appropriation. Smith boasted that this was "the biggest and most effective single effort put forth to support the [committee's] continuation." The Constitutional Educational League, named in the recent federal-grand-jury action against seditious groups, claims that on one occasion when the Dies committee was threatened, it "secured over 4,000,000 signatures to petitions and deluged Congress with an avalanche of letters and telegrams from aroused patriots." Other groups named in the federal-grand-jury sedition charges espoused the Dies cause with equal fervor.

The Dies committee's occasional thrusts at fascist leaders have almost never alienated them. They have knowingly interpreted the committee's infrequent anti-fascist moves as necessary political camouflage, put on in the interest of obtaining a new Congressional sanction. James True, for example, carefully explained to subscribers to his *Industrial Control Reports* that Dies "had to play politics until he procured a large appropriation," but that actually "several members of the committee deplore the un-American investigation of George E. Deatherage and General George Van Horn Moseley, and that their influence in the conduct of future hearings will be effective." William Dudley Pelley assured his *Silver Shirts* that Dies "for propaganda reasons must rant and roar against race prejudice and religious intolerance but behind the scenes . . . a different trend is apparent." At rare intervals a minor leader, like Robert Edmondson, has been provoked by some temporary discomfiture at the hands of the committee into denouncing it for "placing Jews before Americans." But generally the fascist attitude toward the Dies committee has been characterized by warm approval and a nice understanding of its political difficulties.

The committee chairman, to whose poll-tax mentality fascist ideas offer no real shock, has encouraged this un-

October
derstand
by a sin
him to a
was onl
Madison
was in
in dang
lies of v
for who
cheered
and oft
man of
America
at a lun
cil, arr
James V
expedit
hunter
jeopard
mittee
son to f
their pr
Altho
at fasci
of the c
posed t
to Ame
ganda
enormo
informe
stitution
gression

understanding. A feeling of ideological kinship, bolstered by a simple, indiscriminating desire for applause, led him to appear at meetings whose distinctly fascist nature was only thinly disguised. He endeared himself to a Madison Square Garden meeting, at which *Social Justice* was hawked, by saying that "we in America are not now in danger of any invasion of foreign armies despite the lies of war-mongers and propagandists." The audience, for whom this sentiment had a specific connotation, cheered lustily. Dies addressed many similar audiences, and often was gratified to hear himself described as "the man of the hour." He spoke for the clearly pro-fascist American Defense Society and was the featured speaker at a luncheon of the New York State Economic Council, arranged by Merwin K. Hart and attended by James Wheeler-Hill and Fritz Kuhn. These fraternal expeditions created a close personal bond between the hunter and the quarry. Dies could not be expected to jeopardize firm friendships through some tactless committee action. Nor could the un-Americans see any reason to fear the activities of one who implicitly indorsed their program and openly accepted their hospitality.

Although vastly helpful, Dies's personal appearances at fascist assemblies have been only a subordinate phase of the committee's usefulness to those whom it was supposed to curb. The main value of the Dies committee to American fascists has been as a mighty central propaganda agency. It has provided the fascist press with enormous quantities of lush and, to the gullible and uninformed, damning material against our democratic institutions. It has given them "evidence," bearing a Congressional committee's stamp of approval, to show that

New Deal leaders are tainted with communism, that New Deal agencies are overrun with reds and aliens, and that the President himself somehow is implicated in all this villainy. Dies, according to the Federal Communications Commission, is the American quoted most frequently in Axis propaganda broadcasts. What perhaps is more to the point is that the Dies committee, from its inception, has been a principal source of material for American fascists.

Through its own facilities the committee has given the same material, a mixture of fantasy and half-truth, a far wider currency than fascist channels alone would permit. The respectable *New York Times* never would feature a charge by Pelley or Winrod that Leon Henderson is a Communist and a crackpot, but it has gladly done so when the charge was made through the Dies committee. In this respect the glaring unfairness and falsity of most Dies committee testimony enhance its worth to American fascists. For when a Congressional committee accepts and respectable newspapers print testimony that seems untrue, they extend the bounds of credibility, destroy the recognizable marks of truth and authority, and open the way for acceptance of the most grotesque fascist propaganda. Thus the Dies committee, with the aid of the anti-New Deal press, has in effect built up a receptive audience for fascist libels which previously evoked only scornful disbelief.

American fascists have shrewdly exploited the Dies committee's authority. Many of the spectacular "revelations" which they were able to publish as the committee's official findings actually originated in their own files. The device is plain to anyone who has followed

Fight Communism

Save America

Attend These Meetings

Join American Patriots

AMERICAN PATRIOTS, INC.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR DECEMBER

You and your friends are invited to attend these important, illuminating meetings.

ISSUED BY N.Y. CHAPTER, AMERICAN PATRIOTS, INC., 49 W 44th ST., NEW YORK; NATL. HDQRS., GREENWICH, CONN.

Sunday
Dec. 4
3 PM **PRO-AMERICAN FORUM**
DR. J. B. MATTHEWS
Former member of the Communist "Inner Circle" will speak on
"Communism in the Federal Government"
Dr. Matthews, whose recent testimony before the Dies Committee was sensational, will tell a startling story of the extent to which the Communist Party has bored its way into Washington.
Hotel Biltmore, Madison Ave. at 43d St. Admission 50 cents

Thursday
Dec. 8
12:30 PM **LUNCHEON MEETING**
under the auspices of
THE NEW YORK STATE ECONOMIC COUNCIL
Speaker
CONGRESSMAN MARTIN DIES OF TEXAS
Chairman of the Congressional Committee
Investigating Un-American Activities
Hotel Biltmore Price, including luncheon, \$2.00

Thursday
Dec. 8
2 PM **ORGANIZATION MEETING**
of the new American Federation Against Communism
The meeting is for active members of the
New York State Chapter

Sunday
Dec. 11
3 PM **PRO-AMERICAN FORUM**
Two outstanding speakers
MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE VANHORN MOSELEY
A fearless, outspoken patriot, whose attack against Administration policies after his retirement from the Army this Fall produced a real storm.
ALSO
DON BATE
Formerly United Press correspondent in Shanghai
A brilliant speaker and an authority on international affairs
"Keep America Out of War"
Hotel Biltmore Admission 50 cents

Thursday
Dec. 15
8 PM **PROTEST RALLY**
This great rally is being held to protest against the Un-American censorship of radio, as exercised against Father Coughlin, Boake Carter, and others.
Bainbridge Colby, Senator James A. Reed of Missouri and other men of national prominence will speak.
Meeting sponsored by Committee for Defense of Americans' Constitutional Rights
Manhattan

the committee's proceedings. Innumerable stories which blossomed into newspaper headlines were planted by avowed fascists with the aid of the committee. Dies admitted to one reporter that Father Coughlin supplied him with "anti-Communist" material. Elizabeth Dilling, in condemning her indictment for sedition by the federal grand jury, offered as proof of her Americanism the fact that she "furnished data and assistance to the Dies committee." Joseph Kamp, the director of the Constitutional Educational League, is known to frequent the committee's office, and numerous other fascists have enjoyed helpful and sometimes profitable relations with it. Their presence explains at least in part why so much of the committee's record runs parallel to the fascist "line," and why its chairman's occasional ranting against intol-

erance or race prejudice has never disquieted them.

The Dies committee, according to a blunt critic, could do the United States no greater disservice if its loyalty were owed directly to Hitler. This judgment, in the light of the record, seems only mildly intemperate. The committee, aided and incited by its fascist prompters, has attacked our democratic symbols with subtlety, cunning, and cynical ruthlessness. Although a "fact-finding" body, it has, in the fascist tradition if not with fascist motives, subordinated truth to ideology, "revealing" only enough obvious facts to acquire a sympathetic hearing for its less obvious distortions. It has permitted itself to become something close to a Trojan horse for American fascism, and the record often indicates it has done so with open eyes and genuine zest.

Four to Three

BY CHARLES VAN DEVANDER

THREE members of Martin Dies's Committee on Un-American Activities provide him with a clear majority of co-conspirators and congenial stooges. J. Parnell Thomas of New Jersey, "who can find subversion in trees and isms in running brooks," and Joe Starnes of Alabama, who suspects anyone whose grandparents were not born in America, form a hard core of toryism and intolerance around the committee chairman. Noah Mason, an isolationist Republican from Illinois, completes the majority.

The committee minority, which is timid to the point of worthlessness, consists of two New Dealers—Jerry Voorhis of California and Joe Casey of Massachusetts—and Harry Beam, a Democratic machine politician from Chicago. Voorhis, a rich man's son who once called himself a Socialist, is genuinely liberal but invincibly naive. The Dies majority considers him an "easy mark." Casey, a more astute politician, would be a better match for the reactionaries on the committee, but he has found it expedient to take a minor part in the committee's proceedings. He has left the burden of opposition to Voorhis, whom he credits with "doing a splendid job." Beam, a nondescript product of the Kelly-Nash organization

who "goes along" with the New Deal on domestic legislation and "went along" with the Administration's pre-Pearl Harbor foreign policy, has only a tenuous claim to membership in the minority. He has contributed little to the committee record and often has "gone along" with the majority.

Thomas and Starnes, together with Dies, understand exactly the function their committee is performing, and they have not allowed the minority's occasional and feeble protests to deflect them in any important way. With the help of the anti-New Deal bloc in Congress, they are using the committee consciously and effectively to obstruct liberal laws and agencies. Unlike Dies, who assumes the role of a detached patriot, his colleagues often admit their purpose, which they see as a perfectly legitimate one.

John Parnell Thomas, who exceeds Dies in bitterness toward the New Deal, began his career as a bond salesman in Wall Street at a salary of \$12.50 a week. He eventually became the head of an insurance-brokerage firm. Thomas drifted into politics after the war, from which he emerged as a captain. His tory views were an



Starnes

Beam

Voorhis

Casey

Mason

Thomas

asset in New Jersey Republican circles. He was elected to the Allendale borough council in 1925, became mayor of Allendale the following year, and in 1928 was re-elected. In 1936, after two terms in the New Jersey Assembly, where the Republicans shared power and jobs with Frank Hague, Thomas was elected to Congress. The red menace, alien-led labor unions, and the New Deal have been Thomas's chief concerns as a Representative. His most conspicuous Congressional acts, aside from his participation in the Dies committee, have been a proposal to deny the benefits of the Wagner Act to unions with alien officers and the introduction of a resolution asking that Secretary of Labor Perkins be impeached for her failure to deport alien radicals. Thomas was only mildly chagrined when William Dudley Pelley, during his appearance before the Dies committee, called the impeachment plan a "masterpiece" and said that he had distributed it in pamphlet form to 100,000 people. Thomas apparently regards labor unions as a breeding ground of subversion. He has denounced the National Labor Relations Board as a shield for potential saboteurs. He also has offered the Dies committee files to employers so that they may check upon the "subversive" connections of troublesome employees. Thomas uses red menace, fifth column, and New Deal as roughly synonymous terms. "The fifth column in the United States has flourished under New Deal rule," he said in a radio address in 1940. "The surest way of removing the fifth column from our shores is to remove the New Deal from the seat of government."

Joe Starnes, the Alabama Democrat, has a great deal in common with Thomas, the New Jersey Republican. Both are Tories and pretend to fear that the Dies committee "may turn out to be the last remaining safeguard against the dictatorship of the proletariat in America." Starnes, in the tradition of Southern standpatters, believes in womanhood and the poll tax and "standing in" with the interests. The Alabaman, who taught school before going into the practice of law and politics, was elected to Congress in 1934. He is energetic, hard-working, and politically ambitious. His immediate goal is a seat in the Senate. It is significant that the Alabama Power Company and the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company, Alabama's biggest corporations, are backing him despite his support of the TVA, the pet hate of the power crowd. His corporation friends doubtless understand that no opponent of TVA can stay in politics in the Muscle Shoals district. Apart from that one excusable lapse there is nothing in Starnes's record to which any conservative could object. He has a perfect anti-New Deal score on other domestic matters and is particularly "sound" on labor questions.

Like many Southern politicians, Starnes has found the alien to be a convenient political whipping-boy. Nor does he stop with aliens. Lumping tens of millions of patriotic citizens in the same category, he told the 1937 conven-

tion of the Veterans of Foreign Wars that the "huge alien, foreign-born, foreign-stock population" of America constituted a serious problem to the nation in a war-threatened world. Just how many generations back he draws the line on "foreign-stock" citizens, he did not make clear. But he was quite definite about what he thought should be done with them. It was pure folly, Starnes said, "to permit more than six and a quarter millions of aliens to remain in this country to become potential spies and enemies to bore from within."

Starnes's value as an investigator of un-American activities is measured by the fact that he has never considered the Bund dangerous. Another indication of his value was provided during the committee's investigation of the Federal Theater and Writers' Projects. A witness happened to mention Christopher Marlowe's "Faustus." Starnes snapped to attention: "Marlowe?" he said. "Isn't he a Communist?"

Noah Morgan Mason, fourth member of the Dies committee majority, is an amiable sixty-year-old conservative who spent all of his adult life up to 1930 as a pedagogue. In 1930 the local Republican organization snatched him from his books and sent him to the Illinois Senate, where he stayed until elected to Congress in 1936.

Lacking the viciousness and farseeing purpose of the Dies-Thomas-Starnes clique but sharing all its reactionary views, Mason is extremely useful to the committee chairman. When the annual question of appropriation comes up, Dies shrewdly sits back and allows Mason to do most of the talking. Mason, with a show of reasonableness, usually concedes that the committee has made mistakes—who of us hasn't—but assures the House that the committee should be continued on the ground that the good it has done outweighs the bad. It is an effective dodge; the committee admits everything, but answers and explains nothing.

Mason was an isolationist before Pearl Harbor mainly because he deplored the spending of "huge sums" for defense against "imaginary enemies" abroad. A Republican of the Hoover vintage, he dislikes the New Deal's fiscal untidiness, and judges most measures by their possible effect on our tax rate.

Harry P. Beam probably is one of Congress's least distinguished members. He was an assistant corporation counsel in Chicago during the Capone-dominated twenties and was elevated to Congress in 1930. Beam has contributed little to the Dies committee or to the House of Representatives. In the tradition of the Chicago Democratic machine he "votes right," with only occasional derelictions. He has been no problem to the Dies-Starnes-Thomas triumvirate in their conduct of the committee, although he has balked at approving the worst of their "reports." Like Mason, he is useful window-dressing.

Joseph Casey, an able if at times excessively prudent

young lawyer from Clinton, Massachusetts, has been in the House since 1936. His record on domestic legislation and foreign policy has earned him the approval of Massachusetts liberals, who now are supporting him for the Democratic Senatorial nomination, to oppose Henry Cabot Lodge this fall. Casey is an effective fighter but has preferred not to become a focal point for the widespread indignation against the methods and aims of Martin Dies. Instead he merely backs Voorhis in an opposition that has been singularly inept. Casey, however, is not all political prudence. He courageously upheld the New Deal's pre-Pearl Harbor foreign policies, although he knew his anti-isolationist votes would cost him the support of important political factions in Massachusetts.

H. Jerry Voorhis, a Mr.-Smith-Goes-to-Washington type, is one of the most earnest liberals in American politics, but as a member of the Dies committee he has sadly disappointed his friends and supporters. Up to February 9, 1939, Voorhis had been on the sidelines, criticizing the methods of the Dies committee as "reprehensible." Then a vacancy occurred on the committee, and Speaker Bankhead—with the express approval of President Roosevelt—appointed Voorhis to fill it. No one foresaw what was to follow. The assignment blinded the serious young Californian to what had been perfectly obvious to him before. Once on the committee he abandoned his worthy efforts to destroy it and began trying to reform it instead. He still is trying.

Voorhis, whose family fortune has never impinged on his social conscience, was a registered Socialist in the days before the New Deal, that being "the only way I could voice my protest against the reactionary leadership of both major parties." With the advent of President Roosevelt he became a Democrat "with a clear conscience." He was elected to Congress in 1936 during the upsurge of California radicalism and was reelected two years later and again in 1940.

Until his association with the Dies committee, Voorhis was often extolled as the leading liberal in Congress. Unencumbered by Marxist prejudices, he had a broad, instinctively American view and a courage which liberals successful in politics frequently lack. Voorhis is aware of his recent fall from grace and is deeply troubled, but shows no sign of altering his conduct. He seems determined to continue his efforts at reform, although so far they have failed notably. The committee majority makes decisions at meetings to which he is not invited, issues reports the existence of which he never suspects, and rudely rebuffs his polite attempts to modify their procedure.

Nevertheless, despite the almost unanimous disapproval of his liberal colleagues, Voorhis believes that he is following the wisest course and that he is restraining the committee from even worse excesses. The basis for his belief is not apparent in the record. What is apparent is that his is exactly the kind of naivete on which the reactionary Dies majority has flourished.

The Small Fry

BY JAMES WECHSLER

THROUGH the doors of the Dies committee hearings room have passed some noxious specimens of Americans. Many of those whom the committee amiably described as "investigators" or "experts" had previously earned less flattering descriptions as professional anti-Semites, pro-fascists, labor spies, and convicts. Their records did not deter Martin Dies from accepting their unsupported testimony as gospel truth.

Nobody pretends that the political bias or the prison record of an informant automatically invalidates his testimony. The significant fact is that the Dies committee made no real effort to test the reliability of the men who took the stand or to judge their "evidence" against the shady backgrounds from which they emerged. It is no exaggeration to suggest that some of the Dies investigators and experts themselves provide a colorful rogues' gallery for any future committee investigating un-American activities.

The Dies committee revealed its preference for ques-

tionable informants quite early in its career. Its first senior investigator was Edward F. Sullivan, whose qualifications included a six-month jail sentence for larceny and obvious ties with some of our most notorious fascists. Sullivan, a member of the steering committee at the anti-Semitic National Conference of Clergymen and Laymen held in 1936 at Asheville, North Carolina, worked closely with Gerald Winrod, now under indictment by a federal grand jury, and Michael Ahearn of the James True Associates. Later he joined True in circulating *Industrial Control Reports*, one of the many news letters circulated by the friends of American fascism.

Sullivan's record dramatized the link between pro-fascists and the labor-spy ring. The La Follette committee exposed his services as an espionage agent for the Railway Audit and Inspection Bureau, services which presumably were among his qualifications when Dies hired him. Exhibit 118 of the hearings of the La Follette committee is a letter from I. D. Rice, a leading official of the Rail-

O
ce
p
a
W
in
R
th
ob
m
th
te

pl
m
In
w
de
re

way B
"Please
solicito
Dur
brough
mittee'
him, F
The da
he was
crime.

Out
Sullivan
fifth-co
commit
are conc
Bund a
not sha
For the
otic age
the acti
the peo
those af
Sulliv
even fo
commit
ciated w
Anot
Steele, c
dozens

Letters for Dies

"As national chairman of the Committee of One Million, the writer is proud to report that when Mr. Dies asked for a continuation of his committee, together with an additional appropriation, the Committee of One Million carried a petition bearing more than 400,000 names to Washington calling for the continuation of the investigation. We placed this petition before the Rules Committee, and it was also presented on the floor of the United States Congress. Expert observers insist that this was the biggest and most effective single effort put forth to support the continuation of this statesmanlike committee."—Gerald L. K. Smith.

"In your appreciation of the work accomplished by Dies, employ some of your leisure moments to write him a letter of encouragement. In fact, a million of letters, brought to his desk, would be an answer to those who are bent on destroying him and the legislative body which he represents."—Social Justice.

way Bureau, to his New England manager. Rice wrote: "Please note letter from Mr. E. F. Sullivan. He is a solicitor that we have put on in the Boston territory."

During his tenure as Dies's principal sleuth, Sullivan brought a character named Alvin I. Halpern to the committee's witness stand. When Sullivan made contact with him, Halpern was under indictment for grand larceny. The day of his second appearance before the committee he was sentenced to a term of one to two years for the crime.

Out of his crowded criminal and espionage career Sullivan developed some interesting thoughts about the fifth-column menace. He once observed in a report to committee members that "Jewish organizations naturally are concerned about the activities of the German-American Bund and the so-called Silver Shirts, but this concern is not shared by any other agency with whom I contacted. For the most part the law enforcement groups and patriotic agencies seemed to think that this great agitation over the activities of the Bund is but a smoke screen to take the people's mind off the real menace, communism and those affiliated with it."

Sullivan's past activities finally made him too "hot" even for Dies to carry, and he was dropped from the committee's staff. When last heard from he was associated with a Ukrainian American fascist group.

Another loquacious expert whom Dies used was Walter Steele, editor of the *National Republic*. Steele "exposed" dozens of liberal organizations, including the American

Civil Liberties Union, as part of the "Communist movement." His testimony occupies 402 pages of the Dies committee volumes. What the Dies committee never explored were Walter Steele's own subversive activities, which are continuing today.

Chief lobbyist for the American Coalition, Inc., a super-patriotic alliance which includes among its affiliates such fascist groups as the American Vigilant Intelligence Federation and the Paul Reveres of Chicago, Steele is one of America's leading pro-fascists. His publication, which has a circulation of almost 50,000, supported Franco during the Spanish war. It specializes in alien-baiting and depicts all labor leaders as Communists. As lobbyist for the American Coalition, Steele appears at every state and federal investigating committee to give "impartial" information on communism. One of Steele's latest undertakings was an attempt last March to introduce fascist literature into Puerto Rican schools. His efforts incurred the wrath of the head of Puerto Rico's school system, and the Army Intelligence Service balked the project by declaring that "the *National Republic* is a fascist publication which should not be allowed in the public schools of Puerto Rico."

The Dies committee waged war against the WPA, a key New Deal project. Its thesis was that the WPA was in the grip of the Communists. As its stellar witness it brought forth Edward Banta. Brother Banta, though the Dies committee did not reveal it, was closely associated with the American National Labor Party, an undisguised pro-Nazi outfit. He was a speaker for the Christian Front and a contributor to Bund publications. Banta is still an active fascist. His current associations include the League of American Women Against Communism. Banta, who believes that the Communist Party "is composed of outcast Jews," has also sought to form an alliance with Leon De Aryan, recently indicted for sedition.

The committee listened attentively to the findings of Harper Knowles as he gave the lowdown on subversive activities on the West Coast. The committee identified him as a representative of the American Legion—an association which Legion officials quickly disclaimed. One commentary on Knowles's reliability was provided by James S. Landis, who observed bluntly that Knowles "lied when he dared to."

While the Dies committee was making Knowles a public benefactor, another government inquiry was delving into the organization to which he devoted most of his energies—the Associated Farmers, of which Knowles was secretary. The La Follette committee found the Associated Farmers guilty of fomenting anti-labor violence throughout California. It described the Associated Farmers' movement as part of the pattern of native American fascism. The Dies committee never investigated the Associated Farmers but blandly accepted evidence from its secretary,

who characterized California's Governor Olson as a "Communist sympathizer."

Hazel Hoffman, an agent of the Dies committee, testified in May, 1941, about the American Peace Mobilization. It is questionable whether the Dies committee needed a special agent to expose the A. P. M. as a Communist front. A significant item, generously overlooked by Martin Dies, was Hazel Hoffman's connection with the Constitutional Education League. The league, headed by Joseph Kamp, a labor-baiter and shrewd pro-fascist, was one of the Dies committee's most vocal supporters. The recent government sedition indictment listed it as one of the organizations through which conspiracy against the war effort was being carried on. Yet Hazel Hoffman was a heroine in the Dies committee play.

George E. Sullivan, former counsel for General George Van Horn Moseley and ex-Representative Jacob Thorkelson, was still another expert welcomed by the Dies committee. Sullivan, whose recent book, "The Road to Victory," charges that there is a Talmudist plot to overthrow our government, was known as an anti-Semite before his appearance at the hearings. His mode of thinking, which endeared him to *Social Justice*, the *Defender*, and other pro-fascist publications, is illustrated best by the title of one of his booklets: "Wolves in Sheep's Clothing—An Authentic Portrayal of the Perfidious Proposals of Communism and Socialism in Their Real Setting, as Masks and Devices Employed by Amazingly Organized and Financially Powerful Occult Forces, Bent upon World Conquest."

Many Dies experts had a direct stake in "smearing" specific New Deal agencies. A good example of a vested interest posing—unchallenged—as a detached reporter was Alice Lee Jemison, who came before the committee to accuse the Indian Bureau of the Department of the Interior of attempting to spread "communism and paganism" on the reservations. Miss Jemison's stake was simple. She was Washington representative of the American Indian Federation, organized to lobby for legislation giving thousands of Indians \$3,000 each. The Indian Bureau was opposing the legislation. But Miss Jemison got her headlines as an expert on subversion.

Dies could also have discovered, if he had bothered to inquire, that Miss Jemison had contributed to at least one fascist newspaper and had been associated with Elizabeth Dilling.

One of the shadiest episodes in the history of the Dies committee is that involving David Mayne. Mayne, who had been Silver Shirt Pelley's Washington "agent," was employed by the committee apparently to embarrass Dies's liberal critics—especially Representative Frank Hook, a Michigan Democrat—who, the committee had learned, were preparing an indictment of Dies's mysterious associations with leading friends of the fascist front. Mayne made contact with Dies's foes and sold them copies of

letters allegedly written by Pelley boasting of a secret agreement with the Dies committee. Since Mayne's credentials as a Pelley representative were beyond dispute, the letters were purchased in good faith. They were issued as part of a general exposé of Dies, who then triumphantly produced Mayne's proof that the letters were forgeries. Subsequently Mayne was brought to trial. He pleaded guilty to charges of forgery and taking money under false pretenses, but sentence was unaccountably suspended.

Other Dies informants included John W. Koos, the Ukrainian fascist leader, who in 1938 cabled congratulations to Hitler for his success in settling "the minority problem," and Professor Edward I. Fenlon, who assured readers of the Coughlinite Brooklyn *Tablet* that if Franco were a fascist, it would not necessarily make him or his cause vicious. There were also the anonymous labor spies who supplied Dies with the information on the basis of which he charged that the C. I. O. was overrun with felons.

Why did the Dies committee accept the "revelations" of these walking delegates from the fascist fringe? Probably because it shared all their preconceptions. Certainly the most lurid charges against the New Deal could not have seemed improbable to a man who like Dies believes that Supreme Court Justice Murphy and Vice-President Wallace are tainted with communism. Whatever the motive behind his performance, Martin Dies chose to give America's political underworld its day in court—with friendly attorneys and a packed bench, and, in some instances, with liberal fees for services rendered.

They Support Dies

"[I have] the highest respect for the Dies committee and sympathy with its program."—George Sylvester Viereck.

"I am in favor of it [the Dies committee] to be appointed again and I wish them to get more money."—Fritz Kuhn.

"I founded the Silver Legion in 1933 . . . to propagate the exact same principles that Mr. Dies and this committee are engaged in prosecuting now."—William Dudley Pelley.

"Behind the whole fight on the Ku Klux Klan has been that hand of an insidious alien influence. The vicious fight on the Klan sprang from the same source which has fought the Dies committee from the day of its inception."—Ku Klux Klan pamphlet.

ATION

a secret
yne's cre-
dispute,
ere issued
en trium-
ers were
trial. He
g money
countably

Koos, the
congratu-
minority
o assured
if Franco
im or his
bor spies
e basis of
run with

relations"
ge? Prob-
Certainly
ould not
s believes
President
e the mo-
e to give
rt—with
in some
d.

Dies
" —

tee]
o get

. to
Mr.
rose-

Klan
ence.
the
mit-
Klux

TH

Pr

W

Af

I V

Hi

Th

Be

Pr